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ABSTRACT

Following a brief investigation of the need for performance objectives specifying teacher behavior, this report develops a performance base for field experience. The purpose of performance objectives in field experiences and the relationship of these objectives to the student teacher, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor are discussed in detail. The development of performance objectives for field program is based on the following considerations: identification of clientele (groups) providing performance statements about expected teacher behavior; a survey of clientele to secure goal and performance statements; preparation of performance statements based on evaluation behavior, instructional behavior, planning and organizing classroom behavior, classroom management behavior, and guidance and couseling behavior; analysis and revision; field testing the performance statements; and legitimization of performance objectives. Finally, possible problems in developing performance objectives include intrusion resistance, apathy and a complexity maze. A four-item bibliography is included. (MJM)

DEVELOPING A PERFORMANCE BASE FOR FIELD EXPERIENCES: A GRASS ROOTS APPROACH*

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The competency based teacher education program is a conceptual reality. Efforts to operationalize the concept are now being conducted throughout our nation at various levels of education. In 1968 models of competency based elementary education programs were prepared by Syracuse University, the Ohio Consortium, Teachers College-Columbia University, University of Georgia, Michigan State University, the University of Wisconsin, Florida State University, the University of Massachusetts, and the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory. The massive effort of these institutions and collaborative groups led the thrust toward competency based teacher preparation programs. Their efforts showed that performance objectives could be specified for teacher education programs. Since that time in 1968 we have witnessed the implementation of competency based programs in a number of locations in eastern, midwest, and western United States.

WHY HAVE WE MOVED TOWARD A PROGRAM THAT SPECIFIES TEACHER BEHAVIOR?

We have moved toward a more definitive view of teaching behavior because we believe this movement has aided the teacher preparation process. Now, the university supervisor and cooperating teacher can

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help the student teacher recognize the broad role of a teacher and plan learning activities to elicit this broad spectrum of behaviors.

Performance objectives are the key to this process for they are written sets of behaviors that the student may perform in order to demonstrate behavior required of teachers.

WHY USE PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES IN FIELD PROGRAMS?

Performance objectives are useful for a number of reasons:

1. They identify in advance the basis for evaluating student teacher behavior.

2. They help the student teacher assume a great share of the responsibility for defining the role of a teacher.

3. Since the student teachers vary, each can select an individualized pattern of performance objectives. Thus, the functioning role of a teacher may be reached in different ways.

4. Weekly evaluation conferences may be made more relevant when specific performance objectives are discussed during the supervisory conference. Indeed, checklists of selected performance objectives may be used for the conferences. This process will help the participants to discuss pertinent behavior and will help reduce the tendency to stray away from analysis of actual behavior.

5. The use of performance objectives by the cooperating teachers and student teachers should help identify teacher preparation program needs. The feedback from cooperating teachers may, for example, suggest that a particular need is not being met at the university, but is assumed to be.

6. A more realistic evaluation of the student teacher at the

end of the experience should be facilitated by use of performance objectives. Placement forms might contain direct reference to performance objectives achieved.

7. A sense of fair play should develop between student teacher and evaluators if the ground rules for judgment are made clear. Use of performance objectives might save time involved in guessing what the evaluators want - be they university or public school evaluators.

USING PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

Student Teachers

What does the teacher do in the real live situation? This question is often in the mind of the beginning student teacher who has recent university classroom experience but little teaching role experience. His academic experience is now ready to be integrated in the teaching role. Performance objectives arranged in some classification system help the student to analyze the "whole" role and decide where his university classroom experiences fit. Thus, performance objectives help to orient the student teacher to the role of teacher.

The performance objectives may also help the student teacher interpret the behavior he is observing. Then, at a later time, these same objectives may help the student teacher act in response to his observations.

COOPERATING TEACHERS

Very often cooperating teachers are faced with the problem of how to help the student teacher during the first week of experience. They desire information about student teacher capabilities and yet have no means to identify specific behavior proficiencies. Performance objectives might meet this need, because they are readily adaptable to a checklist or observation form.

The performance objectives also serve as a planning guide much as Individually Guided Education material aids decision-making regarding pupil learning activities. Knowledge of the student teacher's proficiencies will allow the cooperating teacher to plan activities that will optimize the number of performance objectives achieved by the student teachers. Cooperating teachers can focus on behaviors in a variety of areas and yet be able to see the whole picture of the teacher's role and help the student see this total picture.

Outcomes of evaluation practices are too often reduced to generalities such as "you did a good job," or they may be a more subtle comparison between the student teacher's personal beliefs and those of the cooperating teacher. The words used to describe the teaching behavior become abstract and almost meaningless when translated into cryptic rating categories. Performance objectives aid in describing a person's behavior, and open-ended rating forms are ideal for use in performance based programs. Principals and cooperating teachers have long considered spontaneous comments as important as the check mark on a rating scale. Performance objectives need not hinder the spontanaity of comments. Indeed,

they should become more descriptive and precise.

UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS

Evaluation procedures may be enhanced by the use of performance objectives to develop descriptive rating forms. These forms may be used to record student teacher behavior and then referred to during a conference with student teachers and cooperating teachers.

Performance objectives may also be used to chart progress of student teachers on student teacher recommendation forms containing behavioral classifications. Evaluation procedures which include performance objectives thus become behavior centered and more descriptive.

Counseling and guidance are aided by information recorded in performance objective terms. The process of communication between university supervisor and cooperating teacher would be facilitated by the use of a common language concerning student teacher performance. This communication is necessary during the planning and evaluation process.

Student teacher references may be prepared more precisely with performance data about each student teacher. This source of data aids the author of the recommendations and the student teacher who receives a more descriptive reference.

HOW MAY WE BEGIN TO DEVELOP PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES FOR OUR FIELD PROGRAMS?

The adoption of a performance based program mandates a consideration of a number of variables. It is not our purpose to consider these here, but the reader may read The Power of Competency-

Based Teacher Education: A Report, by Benjamin Rosner, or Competency Based Teacher Education Progress, Problems and Prospects, by Robert Houston and Robert Howsam (eds.), for a fuller explanation of the complexities to be considered in a performance based program.

Our intent in this paper is to focus on the problems of establishing useful performance objectives in our field programs. To help accomplish this task we call your attention to Figure 1 which represents a process of securing and revising performance or behavioral objectives. It assumes that you wish to prepare at least some of your performance objectives with your clientele. It also assumes that universities will not "buy" a complete package of objectives but will modify them.

Identify Clientele

The first task in securing objectives, as suggested by Figure 1, is the identification of clientele. Who are the "producers" and "consumers" of our educational "product". Philosophically, I suppose all of mankind may lay claim to one or more of the labels, but we have to consider the "local laboratory" setting. We have to ask ourselves "where do we educate our students?", and "where do we place them?" The answers are not always obvious. Many of our students may, for example, be teaching but in institutions in the business sector or in military institutions. Education programs may be found in a variety of institutional settings.

Figure 1 contains a selection of clientele that we can readily identify as:

1. People who reside in a particular school community.

2. Teachers who teach in schools cooperating with universities.
3. Professors in higher education at the institution directly concerned or in other institutions.
4. Administrators who recruit students for teaching or who cooperate with our field programs.
5. Students who participate in our programs or are in classes taught by our field students.
6. Business leaders who recruit our students for educational work in their business.

All of these groups may be able to provide performance statements about expected teacher behavior either directly or indirectly. Professors (and others) have, for example, expressed a number of performance statements in the nine performance based models developed in 1968. This example of indirect advice may be supplemented by professors within the institution directly concerned with establishing the performance based program.

Survey Clientele

The next step in the process involves a survey of clientele to secure goal statements or performance statements. Our clientele may not have read Mager (1962), Bloom (1956), and other authors of text concerned with performance objectives or taxonomies, therefore many responses may be in nonperformance terms. The responses should be directed toward survey questions dealing with questions about what constitutes necessary and sufficient teacher behavior. This means that a survey document or interview schedule should be prepared according to a classification schema. Many conceptual frameworks for classifying teacher behavior exist and one may be selected in order to prepare questions for each classification.

We recommend the use of a classification system in order to secure responses beyond the instructional behavior classification. The role of the teacher, we feel, contains more than an instructional behavior component.

Prepare Performance Statements

Responses to the survey activity then have to be translated into performance statements and classified according to the behavioral schema used. We use the term "performance statement" as Mager does in his 1962 book about objectives.

Examples of a classification schema (partial) and possible related performance statements are listed below.

Evaluation Behavior

The student should be able to calculate standard scores from pupil raw scores on a test.

Instructional Behavior

The student should be able to demonstrate the use of role play in an instructional situation.

Planning and Organizing Classwork Behavior

The student should be able to write behavioral objectives.

Classroom Management Behavior

The student should be able to describe rules of pupil behavior used in his/her classroom.

Guidance and Counseling Behavior

The student should be able to demonstrate the use of a positive reward while interacting with a pupil.

Analysis and Revision

The final document should be returned to the clientele for analysis. The main focus of this activity is elimination of statements that are not deemed appropriate or the inclusion of appropriate statements. Also of importance is the priority each statement might have within each classification. When this process is completed each classification might have a series of related performance arranged in some ranked or hierarchial order.

Field Test

The next step is field testing the performance statements in order to identify conditions, criterion level and finally the appropriatness of each statement. The "real classroom" is the center of this activity and this represents a crucial stage in the development of performance objectives. Criterion levels may be a "yes" or "no" decision or they may involve more complex decisions. The condition statement may be a generalized statement or it may be so situationally oriented that it becomes impossible to use. Field testing the performance statement document is,we believe, necessary to obtain a realistic view of conditions and criteria.

Legitimize Performance Objectives - Plan Revision

Once the performance statements have conditions and criterion levels you have reached the performance objective stage. The complete list of performance objectives for each category of the classification schema may be prepared as a handbook for field use. Clientele should have this "handbook" so the process of revision may be started

again. Longer periods of time may elapse before you revise a handbook of performance objectives, but it would help to plan and state the revision periods in the handbook. This "built-in" obsolescence demonstrates recognition of change in necessary or sufficient behaviors and indicates your intent to change.

What Problems May We Anticipate in Developing Performance Objectives

Intrusion Resistance

It seems that the process of specifying performance outcomes is viewed as similar to the task of explaining to father what we did on our late date last night. Somehow performance objectives are viewed as an intrusion into our private world. It is reasonable to anticipate such outcomes when we consider the mode of instruction and the responsibility of instruction in experience based programs. University and public school teachers in the experience based programs have invested a great deal of "self" in their efforts and have perhaps assumed that students shared their investment to the point that instructional intent is clear. Also, the student may be expected to have a clear understanding of relationships among student performance, learning activities and testing activities.

We do not intend to portray intrusion resistance as something to be treated lightly. Some educators view the use of performance objectives as contrary to "academic freedom." We feel that such is not the case.

Apathy

"Who cares about developing performance objectives - it only means more work." Apathy is a very real concern because it may halt

work at the initial stage. You have to present the facts about performance objectives. "Why use performance objectives?" is a question that is voiced by clientele that we seek to serve. Some of the responses to that question are listed in another section of this paper. The main thought to consider in this section is the fact that apathy does exist in the initial stage of development and such apathy is often linked with misconceptions or ignorance about the purpose of performance objectives.

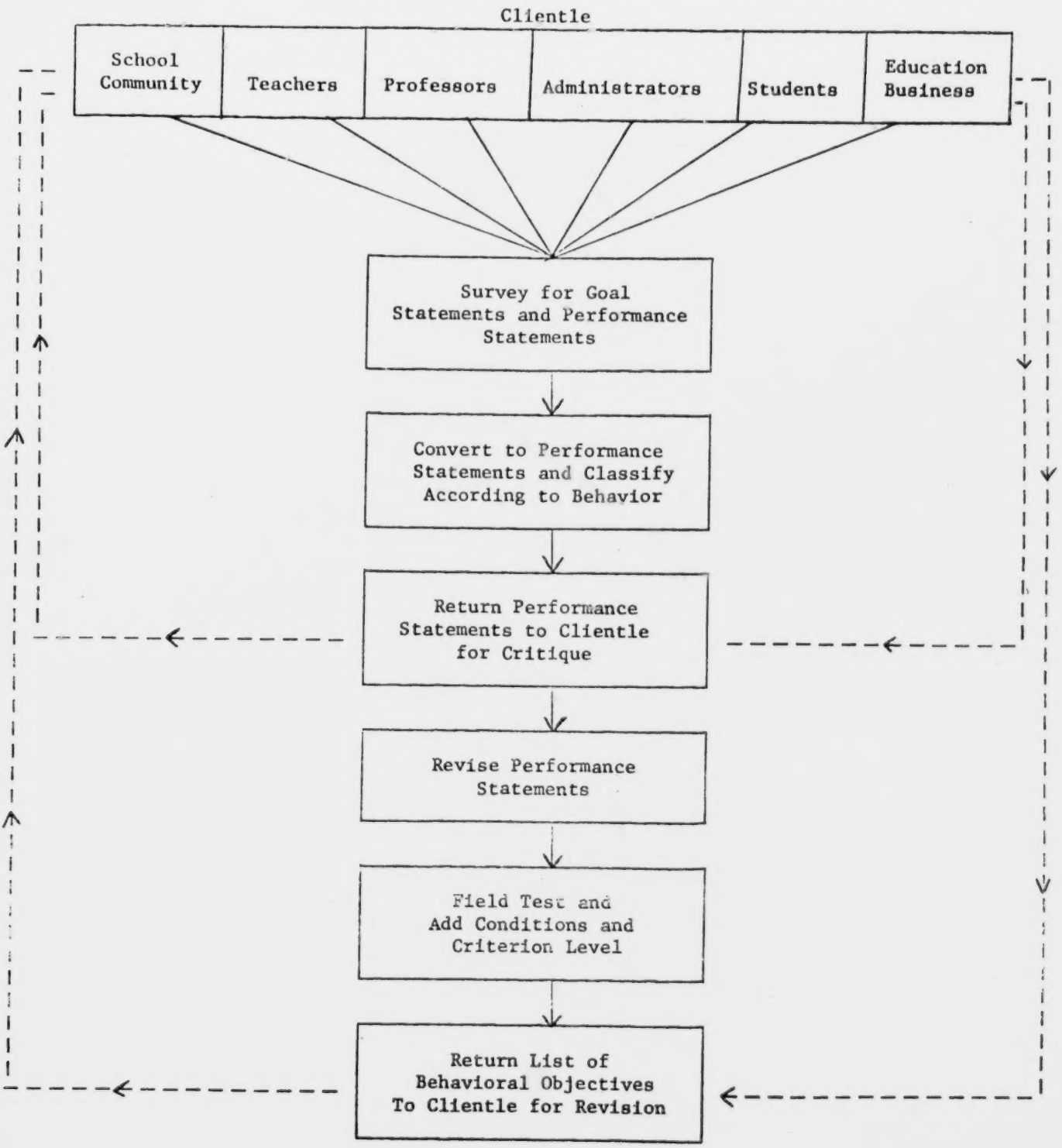
Complexity Maze

As the development process begins, performance objectives dealing with different levels of abstraction will be received. The danger exists that the various performance objectives may become seemingly too complex to organize and the team charged with developing the performance list may be caught in a state of "analysis paralysis." We have suggested that classification schemas be adopted before the performance objectives are analyzed in order to avoid "analysis paralysis." The enormity of the task is reduced somewhat when a classification schema is available. Furthermore, objectives may be arranged in a hierarchical fashion within each classification.

These factors, intrusion-resistance, apathy, and complexity, are some common problems to be faced when we begin the process of developing performance objectives. Some other factors include lack of communication among clientele, unrealistic time schedules, universal vs. local performance objectives, and the problem of specifying terminal performance objectives vs. enabling performance objectives. We have considered a few of the major factors that may be anticipated at the initial stage of development.

FIGURE 1

DEVELOPING PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES FOR FIELD PROGRAMS


Clientle
School Community
Teachers
Professors
Administrators
Students
Education Business
Survey for Goal Statements and Performance Statements
Convert to Performance Statements and Classify According to Behavior
Return Performance Statements to Clientle for Critique
Revise Performance Statements
Field Test and Add Conditions and Criterion Level
Return List of Behavioral Objectives To Clientle for Revision

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